

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, GW

SUBJECT: STRAUSS "INTERVIEW" COULD EXACERBATE CDU/CSU RELATIONS

1. NOVEMBER 5 ISSUE OF "MUENCHNER MERKUR" CARRIES PAGE FOUR STORY ENTITLED "DIRECTED AGAINST EUROPE: STRAUSS SHARES THE CHINESE POINT OF VIEW." STORY, WHICH IS DATELINED MUNICH BUT IS UNDATED, PURPORTS TO BE BASED ON CONVERSATION ("GESPRACH") ON WORLD AFFAIRS WHICH CSU CHAIRMAN FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS HAD WITH MERKUR MILITARY CORRESPONDENT JOCHEN LOESER. FOLLOWING IS SUMMARY OF THE BASIC THESES ATTRIBUTED TO STRAUSS:

(A) SOVIET THREAT TO EUROPE - STRAUSS SHARES CHINESE VIEW THAT SOVIET UNION PRESENTS GREATER THREAT TO EUROPE THAN TO CHINESE.

(B) CHINA'S ROLE IN WORLD POLITICS - CHINA HAS BECOME POTENTIAL GREAT POWER AND WITHOUT "CHINESE CARD" THE POLITICAL SITUATION OF US AND WESTERN EUROPE WOULD BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUBSTANTIALLY MORE DIFFICULT.

(C) DETENTE - THE HELSINKI DECLARATION AND BONN'S EASTERN TREATIES HAVE PROMOTED AIMS OF SOVIETS BUT NOT GENUINE DETENTE. WEST SHOULD NOT BE DELUDED INTO UNDERESTIMATING IMPORTANCE OF MILITARY STRENGTH BY SIREN SONG OF DETENTE OR FALSE PICTURE OF SOVIET MILITARY STRENGTH. NEW SOVIET-GDR TREATY IS PRODUCT OF SOVIET INTERPRETATION OF HELSINKI AND CONTRADICTS BONN'S WISHFUL THINKING. SOVIETS ENVISION EVOLUTION OF A PAN-EUROPE OF LARGEST POSSIBLE NUMBER OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED STATES UNDER SOVIET HEGEMONY.

(D) EUROPEAN UNIFICATION AND EUROPEAN NUCLEAR FORCE - STRAUSS ADVOCATES AN APPEAL TO WESTERN EUROPEANS TO "TRANSFER ESSENTIAL PORTION OF THEIR SOVEREIGNTY IN AREAS OF FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICY TO A COMMON SUPERIOR ENTITY." HE ENDORSES VIEWS OF DREGER AND CDU DEFENSE EXPERT WOERNER ON NECESSITY OF A EUROPEAN NUCLEAR FORCE, IN CONTEXT OF COMMON EUROPEAN DEFENSE FORCES, COORDINATED WITH US NUCLEAR FORCES, AND STATES THAT REJECTION OF SUCH A FORCE IS TANTAMOUNT TO REJECTION OF EUROPEAN POLITICAL UNION. HE STATES THAT EUROPEAN NUCLEAR FORCE WOULD RELIEVE US OF A BURDEN AND GIVE NATO GREATER FLEXIBILITY.

2. COMMENT: BY PUBLICIZING HIS (AND CSU'S) VIEWS ON BASIC FOREIGN POLICY QUESTION FACING FRG, STRAUSS HAS ONCE AGAIN PUT CDU CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE KOHL IN UNENVIABLE POSITION OF CHOOSING BETWEEN THREE UNATTRACTIVE OPTIONS: (A) KEEPING SILENT AND THUS SEEMING TO ACQUIESCE IN STRAUSS'S SELF-APPOINTED ROLE OF UNION SPOKESMAN ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES; (B) AGREEING WITH STRAUSS'S VIEWS, AND THUS OPENING HIMSELF TO CHARGES OF "MEE TOO-ISM," OR (C) SPEAKING OUT IN AN EFFORT TO REGAIN A DEGREE OF MANEUVERABILITY FOR CDU ON PRICKLY OSTPOLITIK-DETENTE ISSUE, THUS GIVING RISE TO INTERPRETATION THAT STRONG DIFFERENCES EXIST IN UNION ON BASIC FOREIGN POLICY, WHICH IN FACT APPEARS TO BE THE CASE.

3. PUBLICATION OF MERKUR INTERVIEW SEEMS LIKELY TO MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT, AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING, FOR CDU AND CSU TO AGREE ON COMMON FOREIGN POLICY PLANK FOR NEXT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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YEAR'S ELECTION PLATFORM. IT ALSO UNDERLINES CONCLUSION (BONN 17852, PARA 9) THAT THERE IS NO RPT NO AGREED CDU/CSU POSITION ON ISSUE OF DETENTE/OSTPOLITIK.

4. WE BELIEVE, BUT ARE NOT ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN, THAT STRAUSS-LOESER "CONVERSATION" TOOK PLACE DURING CSU "WEHRPOLITISCHE ARBEITSKREIS" GATHERING HELD HERE OCTOBER 18-19, AND THUS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE OF SECDEFENSE

SCHLESINGER FROM U.S. CABINET.

5. INFORMAL TRANSLATION OF MERKUR STORY BEING PPCHED
TO ALL ADDRESSEES.SPIVACK

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